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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

October 18, 2001

The Honorable Mitch Daniels
Director, Office of Management and Budget
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
17th Street & Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mitch:

In 1994, the Congress passed the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (FASA). This legislation sought to modernize the Federal acquisition process and to make the process simpler for contracting officers and contractors alike.

Since some provisions of that Act threatened to limit small-business access to procurement, the law provided other initiatives to offset those effects. One of those was a goal for women-owned small firms. FASA set a Governmentwide goal of 5% of contracting dollars for such women-owned concerns. This goal was intended to ensure affirmative access for women in Federal procurement. Instead of setting a mandatory quota that provided enforceable rights, the law created a good-faith goal. Agencies could keep alert for opportunities and phase-in new access for women-owned small businesses.

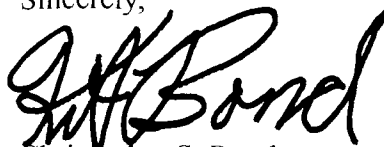
Now is the time to make good on that good-faith goal. Seven years after enactment, the Government has never made good on that promise. The previous Administration could not find a nickel out of every dollar to award to women. Instead, Federal agencies have awarded only a couple of pennies out of every dollar.

It is time to change that, this year. I ask you to contact the head of every agency with procurement authority, and put them on notice that you will hold them accountable to do their part to make the 5% promise to women-owned businesses a reality. I shall contact you again to follow-up on this important matter. Women-owned firms deserve no less.

The Honorable Mitch Daniels
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Thank you very much for your prompt attention to this vital matter. Women-owned firms are the fastest growing sector of our economy, and must be part of any effort to restore our nation's economic health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Bond", written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christopher S. Bond
Ranking Member